

A Lamentable Ballad of the LADYS FALL.

To the Tune of, *In Peseod-time, &c.*



Mark well my heavy doleful tale,
 you loyal lovers all,
 And heedfully hear in your breast
 a gallant ladies fall:
 Long was she woo'd ere she was won,
 to lead a wedded life,
 But folly wrought her overthrow
 before she was a wife.

Too soon (alas) she gave consent
 to yield unto his will,
 Though he protested to be true,
 and faithful to her still:
 She felt her body altered quite,
 her bright hue waxed pale,
 Her fair red cheeks turn'd colour white,
 her strength began to fail.

So that with many a sorrowful sigh,
 this beauteous maiden miled,
 With grievous heart perceiv'd her self
 to be conceiv'd with child:
 She kept it from her father's sight,
 as close as close might be,
 And so put on her silken gown
 none might her swelling see.

Unto her lover secretly
 she did her self betray;
 And walking with him hand in hand,
 these words to him did say:
 Behold (said she) a maid's distress,
 my love, brought to thy bow,
 Behold I go with child by thee,
 but none thereof hath know.

The little babe springs in my womb
 to bear thy father's name.

Let it not be a bastard call'd,
 for I made thee my choice:
 Come come my love, perform thy vow,
 and wed me out of hand;
 And leave me not in this extrem,
 in grief always to stand.

Think on thy former promise made,
 thy vows and oaths each one;
 Remember with what bitter tears
 to me thou mad'st thy moan:
 Convey me to some secret place,
 and marry me with speed;
 And with thy rapier end my life,
 ere further shame proceed.

Alas my dearest love (quoth he)
 my greatest joy on earth,
 Which way can I convey thee hence,
 without a sudden death?
 Thy friends they be of high degree,
 and I of mean estate,
 Full hard it is to get thee forth,
 out of thy father's gate.

Dread not thy self to save my fame,
 and if thou taken be,
 My self will step between the swords,
 and take the harm on me;
 So shall I scape dishonour quite,
 if so I should be slain,
 What could they say, but that true love
 did work a lady's pain.

And not fear any further harm,
 my self will so devise,
 That I will go away with thee
 unseen of mortal eyes;



Disguised like some pitty Page
 I'll meet thee in the dark,
 And all alone I'll come to thee
 hard by my father's park.
 And there (quoth he) I'll meet my love,
 if God do lend me life,
 And this day month without all fail
 I will make thee my wife;
 Then with a sweet and loving kiss,
 they parted presently,
 And at their parting brinish tears,
 stood in each others eye.
 At length the wished day was come
 whereby this lovely maid
 With lovely eyes and strange attire,
 for her true lover staid:
 When any person she spy'd
 come riding o're the plain,
 She thought it was her own true love,
 but all her hopes were vain.
 Then did she weep and sore bewail
 her most unhappy state,
 Then did she speak these woful words,
 when succourless she sat:
 O false forsworn and faithless wretch,
 disloyal to thy love;
 Hast thou forgot thy promise made?
 and wilt thou perjur'd prove.
 And hast thou now forsaken me
 in this my great distress?
 To end my days in open shame,
 which thou might'st well redress:
 Woe worth the time I did believe
 that flattering tongue of thine,
 Would God that I had never seen
 the tears of thy false eye.
 And thus with many a sorrowful sigh,
 homewards she went again,
 No rest came in her wat'ry eyes,
 she felt such bitter pain,
 In travail strong she fell that night
 with many a bitter thorn,
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What woful pangs she felt that night
 both each good woman know.
 She called up her waiting-maid
 that lay at her beds feet,
 Who madding at her mistress's woe,
 did straight begin to weep;
 Weep not (said she) but shut the door
 and windows round about,
 Let none bewail my wretched case,
 but keep all persons out.
 O mistress call your mother dear,
 of women you have need,
 And of some skilful mid-wives help,
 the better you may speed:
 Call not my mother for thy life,
 nor call no women here,
 The midwives help comes now too late,
 my death I do not fear.
 With that she gave spung in her womb,
 no creature being nigh,
 And with a sigh that broke her heart,
 this gallant dame did dye:
 This living little infant young,
 the mother being dead,
 Resign'd his new received breath,
 to him that had him made.
 Next morning came her lover true,
 affrighted at this news,
 And he for sorrow slew himself,
 whom each one did accuse:
 The mother with the new born babe,
 were both laid in one grave,
 Their parents overcome with woe,
 no joy of them could have.
 Take heed you dainty damozels all;
 of flattering words beware,
 And of the honour of your name,
 have you a special care:
 Too true alas this story is,
 as many one can tell;
 By others having learn to be wise,
 and thou shalt do full well.

